

COE Application Handbook

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1. COE Application Procedures

A student visa is required for all international students entering Japan for the purpose of study. To apply for a visa, students must first obtain a "Certificate of Eligibility (COE, 在留資格認定証明書)" from the Japanese Immigration Services Agency (ISA). Ritsumeikan University (RU) will apply by proxy for a COE for incoming students.

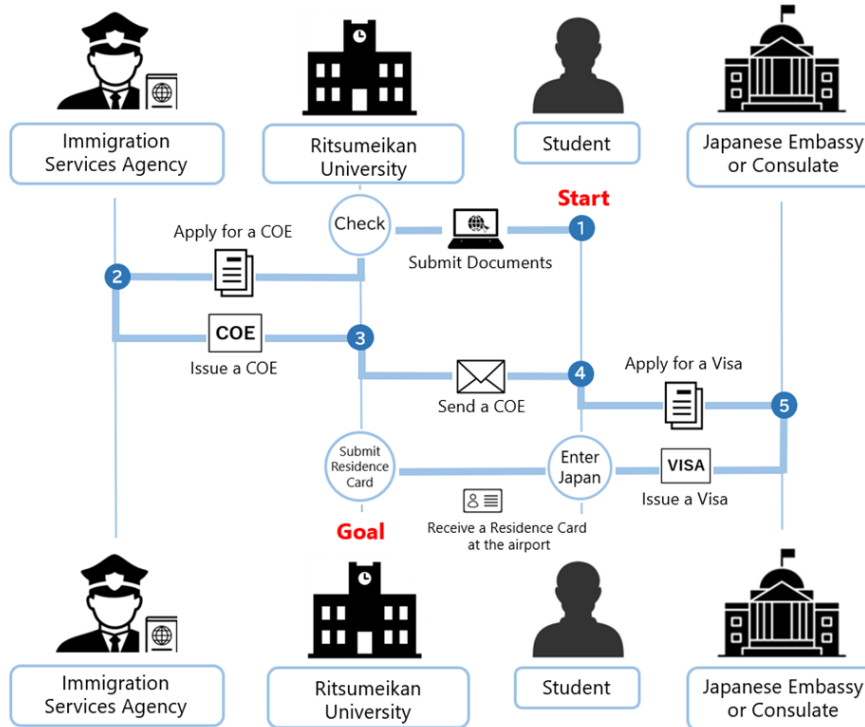


Figure: Flowchart of procedures to acquire a status of residence "Student"

<Requirements>

As a COE can only be issued from the ISA Office in Japan, if students live outside Japan, they need someone to apply for their COE on their behalf (proxy). Therefore, RU serves as a proxy for them if they fulfill all the requirements below. Even with one of them missing, RU does not apply for their COE. In some cases, RU may decide not to apply for their COE even if they meet the requirements.

The conditions are that he/she;

- Has no valid residence card (在留カード)
 - Plans to obtain the status of residence "Student" to attend RU
- *Students planning to acquire a status of residence other than "Student" must apply for a COE by themselves.
- Appoints only RU as a proxy for COE application
 - Showed intention of enrollment by paying all the fees necessary by the deadlines
 - Submits all required COE application documents in acceptable forms by the instructed deadline
 - Provides proof that the student has sufficient funds to cover expenses of his/her period of stay
 - Does not have Japanese nationality

<Submission Period>

Ritsu-Mate opens for uploading on the day each period opens.

Download the Ritsu-Mate manual from below.



https://en.ritsumei.ac.jp/e-ug/apply/after_docs.html/

Submission Period	Program	Final Result Date
2026/4/3 Fri – 2026/4/23 Thu	GLA	2025/12/18 Thu and 2026/3/5 Thu
	GS Major	2025/12/25 Thu, 2026/3/5 Thu, and 2026/3/26 Thu
	CRPS Major	2025/12/25 Thu and 2026/3/26 Thu
2026/5/22 Fri – 2026/6/4 Thu	GLA	2026/4/30 Thu
	GS Major	2026/4/30 Thu and 2026/5/21 Thu
	CRPS Major	2026/5/21 Thu

NOTE

- RU takes no responsibility if the ISA rejects applications, or a COE is not issued in time to arrive for the first day of the semester.
In either case above, the admission fee is not refunded.
- The ISA usually takes one to three months to review a COE application. **RU cannot answer any questions regarding COE issuances** as the ISA does not disclose information on the progress of each application.
- RU will contact you if additional documents are requested by the ISA. Please check your e-mail inbox regularly until you receive your COE.

2. Required Documents

Forms/Documents	Format	How to Submit
Personal Data for Application for COE	Excel	Via Ritsu-Mate 
*Certificate of Bank Balance (If necessary) Translation in English or Japanese	PDF	
*Proof of Income (if necessary) Translation in English or Japanese	PDF	
Request Form for Certificate of Scheduled Enrollment	PDF	
Photograph	JPG/PDF	
Passport	PDF	
*Certificate of Scholarship (Only if you are receiving a scholarship, except for Ritsumeikan University Tuition Reduction Scholarship) (if necessary) Translation in English or Japanese	PDF	Via E-mail 

 **NOTE**

- Depending on the case, documents other than those listed above may be required by the ISA.
- All documents must be issued **within one month** of the submission date.
- Certificates can be in any currency.
- All documents must be written in English or Japanese. For * documents, if you can only obtain them in a language other than the two, the documents must be translated into English or Japanese. You may translate the document by yourself.
- For * documents, make sure to keep the original hard copy with you because we may request you to mail it to us depending on the instruction of the ISA.

a.) Upload via Ritsu-Mate

Personal Data for Application for COE

Based on the information on this form, RU will prepare an application form for the ISA. Please complete three sheets and **submit in Excel format**. Concerning the financial support plan, make sure that you consult with your financial supporter(s).

- Form 1: Basic personal information, educational and employment history, financial support information
- Form 2: Travel History to Japan
- Form 3: Statement of Financial Support

Certificate of Bank Balance

Proof of Income

Following the regulations of the ISA, the applicant must prove the ability to pay all expenses during his/her stay in Japan in order to apply for a COE. Please check which category you fall under in the table below and submit financial evidence.

	Your Financial Supporter	Required Documents
1.	Your parents or relatives with a regular income	Submit both (1) and (2) below. (1) Certificate of Bank Balance in the name of your financial supporter(s) - The balance must be equal to or exceed the total amount of tuition fees and living expenses for a year that you input in the Personal Data Form. - (This is set to demonstrate that you can pay all necessary expenses for at least one year in case your financial situation changes.) (2) Proof of Income of your financial supporter(s) Examples of proof of income:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certificates issued by public offices (e.g. proof of income, tax certificates showing the amount of income, etc.) - Contracts or certificates issued by the employer (any form, with corporate seal or signature) - For pensioners, a certificate of pension entitlement - For self-employed persons, a certificate showing annual income, not annual sales - (If the above documents cannot be submitted) a notarized copy of a bankbook from a financial institution where regular payments can be confirmed.
2.	Your parents or relatives with NO regular income	<p>Certificate of Bank Balance in the name of your financial supporter(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The balance must be equal to or exceed the total tuition fees (assuming tuition reduction or scholarship is not awarded) and living expenses until graduation.
3.	Yourself	<p>Certificate of Bank Balance in your name</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The balance must be equal to or exceed the total tuition fees (assuming tuition reduction or scholarship is not awarded) and living expenses until graduation.

 **NOTE**

- Proof of Income: Certificate(s) issued by your financial supporter(s) are not acceptable. (e.g. If your financial supporter is self-employed, a certificate must be issued by someone other than your financial supporter, such as an accountant or human resources department.)
- Certificate of Bank Balance: The following will not be accepted;
 - Bank passbook or its copy
 - Copy of bank deposit certificate
 - Any type of financial statement, including credit card transactions, investment statements, or capital asset statements.

Request Form for Certificate of Scheduled Enrollment
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The Certificate of Scheduled Enrollment will be necessary for various purposes, including applying for a COE and other situations, such as applying for a scholarship or renting accommodation in Japan.

- Please upload the request form to the Ritsu-Mate.

 **NOTE**

- We will submit the certificate to the ISA. We will send it to you only if you request it by e-mail (ru-iao2@st.ritsumei.ac.jp).

Photograph

This photo will be used for the form of your COE application and your residence card which will be issued at the airport at the time of entry into Japan. The requirements are as follows.

- Must be a color photo taken **within three months** of the submission date
- Good image quality (the photo will be edited to 40mm height × 30mm wide)
- Photo from the shoulders up, with you looking straight ahead
- **No background**
- Face should be fully visible
- Head must be uncovered
- Must be sharp, not blurry
- **No retouch of face image**

Refer to samples of acceptable and unacceptable photos on the following webpage of the ISA and see if a photo looks acceptable or not.

https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/status/photo_info_00002.html

Passport

Please submit photographs of the following pages of your passport.

- Page with personal information and photo
- (If applicable) Pages with additional important information (e.g. the page with your current name after the change of name, your official entire name including all middle names, etc.)

b) Submit via E-mail

(If applicable) Certificate of Scholarship except for Ritsumeikan University Tuition Reduction Scholarship

If all or part of the tuition fee and your living costs in Japan will be funded by a scholarship organization, you are required to submit a certificate which includes all the following information. If the organization only provides paper certificates, please scan your certificate and submit it as a PDF.

- Your name
- Name of organization
- Duration
- Amount you will receive
- Currency
- Date of issue

3. COE Application To COE Issuance

Once your documents are complete, RU will apply for your COE by proxy at the ISA. In general, it takes one to three months from application to issuance. After your COE has been successfully issued, RU will send it to you via e-mail.

NOTE

- RU will contact you if additional documents are requested by the ISA. Please check your e-mail inbox regularly until you receive your COE.
- RU will make a COE application based on the information and documents submitted by you. RU does not bear any responsibility if your COE application is rejected by the ISA.

4. Visa Application

Once you have received your COE, apply for a student visa at your nearest Japanese Embassy/Consulate General. Please check with your local Japanese Embassy/Consulate General before heading there, because various documents will be required, and it takes time to process a student visa.

NOTE

- Check the documents necessary for visa application with the Japanese Embassy/Consulate General where you plan to make a visa application, as the documents differ by applicant's nationality and place of application.
The following link has a list of the locations of the Japanese Embassy/Consulate General.
https://www.mofa.go.jp/about/emb_cons/mofaserv.html
- As a rule, if you enter Japan under "Temporary Visitor (Tourist visa)", RU cannot provide support to change your status from "Temporary Visitor (Tourist visa)".

5. FAQ

Passport

Q1. I have lost my old passport, and I don't have all my entry and exit history.

A1. Please inform the International Admissions Office. E-mail: ru-iao2@st.ritsumei.ac.jp

Q2. I am currently applying to renew my passport. What should I do?

A2. You can still apply for a COE while your passport is being renewed. However, the COE will not be issued until you submit your new passport, even if the process is completed. Therefore, please submit your new passport to the International Admissions Office once you have received it. If you anticipate that it will take longer to renew your passport, please contact the International Admissions Office. If you also plan to change the name on your passport at the time of passport renewal, please read Q&A 3. below.

Q3. I am planning to change the name on my passport before entering Japan, is it OK?

A3. The name on your passport that you will use to enter Japan and the name on your COE must correspond. If you change your name on your passport while applying for a COE, you will need to withdraw your COE application and re-apply.

Financial Evidence

Q4. Who should be my financial supporter?

A4. In principle, your financial supporter should be your parents or other direct relatives. You can have more than one financial supporter. At least one of them must have a regular income.

Q5. Do I need to submit proof of income even if my tuition fees and living expenses can be entirely funded out of the savings of my financial supporter?

A5. Yes. The income information of your financial supporter is required for a COE application form. For a smooth COE application, it is indispensable to demonstrate a consistent and stable financial ability to cover expenses through graduation.

Q6. I am planning to submit only a Certificate of Bank Balance in my name as proof of my ability to pay expenses, is it OK?

A6. If your bank statement shows a bank balance equal to or exceeding the total amount of your living expenses and tuition fees until graduation, we can apply for your COE. If not, please provide the Proof of Income and the Certificate of Bank Balance of your financial supporter(s).

Q7. I plan to work part-time after entering Japan. Can I include the salary from that part-time job in my method of financial support?

A7. No, you cannot. You can only apply for a COE for a student visa on the premise that you have sufficient funds to cover your living expenses and tuition fees without having to work in Japan.

Q8. Can I submit another financial document instead of a Certificate of Bank Balance or Proof of Income?

A8. In principle, we do not accept any type of financial statement, such as credit card transactions, investment statements or capital assets statements.

COE Application up to COE issuance

Q9. I have not received any notification that my COE has been issued, although it has been a long time since I applied. What should I do?

A9. If there is a high volume of applications at the ISA, it may take some time before the COE is issued. We will contact you as soon as your COE is issued.

Q10. Can I be informed about the status of the screening process?

A10. As the ISA does not disclose information on the progress of your COE application, RU cannot respond to inquiries concerning this matter.

Visa Application

Q11. What documents do I need to prepare for a visa application?

A11. Please contact the Japanese Embassy/Consulate General where you intend to apply for the visa.

Entering Japan

Q12. When should I enter Japan?

A12. Student visas are issued to those entering Japan for the purpose of study. Arriving too early before the start of the semester is therefore not recommended. For this reason, we advise students to enter Japan within one month before the start of the semester. (Spring Enrollment: in March; Fall Enrollment: in September).